

Appl. No.: 10/769,031
Amdt. dated June 8, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 9, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend Claims below by deleting items marked with a strikeout (i.e. ~~patent~~) or brackets (i.e., [patent]) and adding items marked with an underline (i.e. patent).

1. (Original) A stringed musical instrument comprising:

- a) a hollow body comprised of a contoured front face, a contoured back face oriented generally opposite said contoured front face, and a continuous side member extending around and between said front and back faces to form a hollow body;
- b) an elongated neck extending from one end of said hollow body terminating in a headstock;
- c) a sound aperture oriented in the central region of said contoured front face; and
- d) a plurality of strings tautly oriented across said contoured front face and said sound aperture and anchored at the end of said headstock.

2. (Original) The stringed instrument of claim 1 wherein said contoured front face is generally contoured toward the user from the central region of said hollow body in the vicinity of said sound aperture to the upper right edge of said surface corresponding to the area in which the arm of a right-handed user of said instrument would rest while strumming said instrument.

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3. (Original) The stringed instrument of claim 1 wherein said contoured front face is generally contoured toward the user from the central region of said hollow body in the vicinity of said sound aperture to the lower left edge of said face corresponding to the area of said front face adjacent to the intersection of said neck and said body and below the longitudinal axis of said instrument.
4. (Original) The stringed instrument of claim 1 wherein said contoured back face is generally contoured away from the user from the central region of said hollow body to the lower right edge of said face corresponding to the area of said back face on the opposite end of the instrument from said neck and below the longitudinal axis of said instrument.
5. (Original) The stringed instrument of claim 1 wherein said contoured back face is generally contoured away from the user from the central region of said hollow body to the upper left edge of said face corresponding to the area of said back face adjacent to the intersection of said neck and said body and above the longitudinal axis of said instrument.
6. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 1 wherein the instrument is a guitar.
7. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 1 wherein said neck of said instrument is twisted or skewed about the longitudinal axis of the guitar.

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8. (Presently Amended) A stringed instrument comprising:

- (a) a body, having a front side and a back side;
- (b) a neck, extending from said body;
- (c) strings extending across said front side of said body; wherein
- (d) at least a portion of either said front side or said back side is contoured, and
wherein said body is contoured on its front side at the end where said neck
extends from said body, said body contoured from the central area to the
bottom edge toward a person holding said string instrument.

9. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein:

the opposite side contours along with said front side or said back side so that said body
contours in that portion.

10. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein:

at the end opposite where said neck extends, said body is contoured on its front side, from
the central area to the top edge, back toward a person holding said stringed instrument.

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11. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein:

at the end where said neck extends, said body is contoured on its back side from the
central area to the top edge, away from a person holding said stringed instrument.

12. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein:

at the end opposite where said neck extends, said body is contoured on its back side, from
the central area to the bottom edge, away from a person holding said stringed
instrument.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein;

said contour is a smooth curve from said central area to said edge.

15. (Original) The stringed instrument of Claim 8 wherein;

said contour is essentially planar from said central area to said edge.

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Please add the following new claims:

16. (New) A stringed instrument comprising:

a body and a neck extending from said body;

said body comprising a front side and a back side, said front side comprising a strumming contour and a fretting contour; and

a plurality of strings extending across the body and along the neck.

17. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 16, wherein said strumming contour runs from a central area of said body toward a top edge of the body toward the player.

18. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 17, wherein said strumming contour is formed on said body to accommodate the strumming arm of the player in an ergonomic position.

19. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 16, wherein said fretting contour runs from a central area of said body toward a bottom edge of the body toward the player.

20. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 19, wherein said fretting contour is formed on said body to allow the fretting arm to reach the higher register frets on said neck

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21. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 16, wherein said back side comprises an upper contour and a lower contour.

22. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 21, wherein said upper contour runs from a central area of the body to a top edge of the body away from the player.

23. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 23, wherein said upper contour is formed on said body to accommodate a portion of the player's torso, thereby positioning said instrument more closely to the player.

24. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 21, wherein said lower contour runs from a central area of said body to a bottom edge of said body away from the player.

25. (New) The stringed instrument of Claims 24, wherein said lower contour is formed on said body to accommodate the leg of the player.

26. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 16, wherein the stringed instrument is a guitar.

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27. (New) The stringed instrument of Claim 16, wherein said neck of said instrument is twisted or skewed about the longitudinal axis of the guitar.